

Applicant: Maurizio Passarotto

Application No.: 10/614,226

IN THE CLAIMS

Amend the claims as follows.

1-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A bicycle wheel rim, comprising:
an inner radial wall having a first through hole;
an outer radial wall having a second through hole aligned with the first through hole;
side walls connecting the inner and outer radial walls together; and
a removable tubular element located through the first and second through holes, the removable tubular element further comprising:
a tubular body having first and second ends;
an outwardly extending flange located on the first end which abuts the outer radial wall proximate to the second through hole;
the tubular body having a length sufficient to cause the second end to extend inwardly beyond the inner radial wall;
a valve connection compatible with a valve body for a bicycle tire;
a removable locking mechanism adapted to engage the removable tubular element and to detachably secure the removable tubular member in position with the inner and outer radial walls secured between the outwardly extending flange and the locking mechanism;
wherein when the removable tubular member is detached from the inner and outer radial walls, the rim can be used with an optional inner tube of the tire.

22. (Original) The rim of claim 21, wherein the locking mechanism comprises a nut that is securable to an outer surface of the removable tubular

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member, the inner and outer radial walls being secured between the flange and the nut.

23. (Currently Amended) The rim of claim 21, further comprising ~~a~~ the valve body rigidly connected to the second end of the removable tubular element for inflating a chamber defined between a tire and the outer radial wall.

24. (Original) The rim of claim 21, further comprising a bushing located between the inner and outer radial walls and defining a passage between the first and second through holes, the removable tubular element is removably disposed through the bushing, wherein the bushing prevents radial displacement of the inner and outer radial walls, relative to each other, when the removable tubular member is secured therein by the locking mechanism.

25. (Original) The rim of claim 24, wherein at least one seal is located between the bushing and the removable tubular member.

26. (Original) The rim of claim 25, wherein the at least one seal comprises an O-ring located in a peripheral groove in an outer surface of the removable tubular member.

27. (Original) The rim of claim 21, wherein the second end of the removable tubular member is threaded to receive the valve body.

28. (Original) The rim of claim 21, wherein the removable tubular member is formed of rigid material.

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29. (Original) The rim of claim 21, wherein the outwardly extending flange extends generally perpendicularly to a longitudinal axis of the removable tubular member to form a widened head.

30. (Original) The rim of claim 21, wherein at least one seal is disposed between the outwardly extending flange of the removable tubular member and the outer radial wall.

31. (Original) The rim of claim 30, wherein the at least one seal comprises an O-ring located in a peripheral groove in the outer radial wall.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Original) An adjustable bicycle wheel rim, comprising:
an outer radial wall defining an external surface, facing generally radially outwardly, and having a through hole;

two side walls disposed on the outer radial wall and being capable of engaging, at separate times, both a tubeless bicycle tire and a bicycle tire having an inner tube;

a tubular element having a first position, in which the tubular element is positioned in the through hole, and a second position, in which the tubular element is ~~separated~~ removed from the through hole outer-radial-wall so that the rim can be used with an optional inner tube of the tire, the tubular element comprising:

a tubular body having first and second ends;

an outwardly extending flange located on the first end which prevents passage of the first end through the through hole;

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the second end adapted to extend inwardly from the outer radial wall when the tubular element is in the first position;

a valve connection compatible with a valve body for a bicycle tire; and

a removable locking mechanism adapted to detachably secure the tubular member in the first position with the outer radial wall secured between the outwardly extending flange and the locking mechanism, wherein when the tubular member is in the second position, the rim can be used with ~~a tire having~~ an inner tube of the tire.

34. (Original) The rim of claim 33, wherein the locking mechanism comprises a nut that is securable to an outer surface of the tubular member, the outer radial wall being secured between the flange and the nut.

35. (Original) The rim of claim 34, further comprising a valve body rigidly connected to the second end of the tubular element for inflating a chamber defined between the tire and the external surface.

36. (Original) The rim of claim 33, further comprising a bushing located in the through hole of the outer radial wall, wherein the tubular element is disposed through the bushing when in the installed configuration.

37. (Original) The rim of claim 33, wherein the second end of the tubular member is threaded to receive the valve body.

38. (Original) The rim of claim 33, wherein the tubular member is formed of rigid material.

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39. (Original) The rim of claim 33, wherein at least one seal is disposed between the flange of the tubular member and the external surface of the outer radial wall.

40. (Original) The rim of claim 39, wherein the at least one seal comprises an O-ring located in a peripheral groove in the external surface of the outer radial wall.

41. (Currently Amended) A bicycle wheel rim, comprising:
an inner wall having a first aperture;
an outer wall having a second aperture aligned with the first aperture;
side walls connecting the inner and outer walls together defining opposed ribs for engaging a tubeless tire; and

a removable tubular element located through the first and second apertures wherein when the tubular element is removed, the rim can be used with an optional inner tube of the tire; the removable tubular element further comprising:

a tubular body having a first end with a flange that abuts the outer radial wall and a sufficient length to permit a second end of the body to extend through the first aperture and beyond the inner radial wall;

a valve body within the tubular body for controlling inflation of a chamber formed between the outer radial wall and a bicycle tire; and

a removable locking mechanism that draws the flange against the outer radial wall and secures the removable tubular element within the first and second apertures.

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42. (Original) The rim of claim 41 further comprising a bushing located between the inner and outer radial walls and defining a passage between the first and second apertures that receives the removable tubular element and prevents radial displacement of the inner and outer radial walls when the removable tubular member is secured by the locking mechanism.

43. (Original) The rim of claim 42 wherein at least one seal is located between the bushing and the removable tubular member.

44. (Original) The rim of claim 43 wherein the at least one seal comprises an O-ring located in a peripheral groove in an outer surface of the removable tubular member.

45. (Original) The rim of claim 41 wherein the second end of the removable tubular member is threaded to receive the valve body.

46. (Original) The rim of claim 41 wherein at least one seal is disposed between the outwardly extending flange of the removable tubular member and the outer radial wall.

47. (Original) The rim of claim 41 wherein the at least one seal comprises an O-ring located in a peripheral groove in the outer radial wall.

48. (Cancelled)

49. (Currently Amended) A bicycle wheel rim, comprising:
an inner radial wall having a first through hole;

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an outer radial wall having a second through hole aligned with the first through hole;

side walls for spacing the inner and outer wall apart by a predetermined distance and connecting the inner and outer radial walls together; and

~~a removable tubular element located through the first and second through holes, the removable tubular element further comprising:~~

a tubular body having first and second ends and a length greater than the predetermined distance between the inner and outer radial walls;

a removable tubular element located through the first and second through holes;

a ~~fixing means~~ weld that retains the first end of the tubular body adjacent to the outer radial wall proximate to the second through hole with the second end extending inwardly beyond the inner radial wall;

a valve connection compatible with a valve body for a bicycle tire;

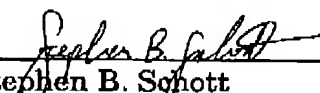
a removable locking mechanism adapted to removably engage the removable tubular element to the tubular body ~~and to detachably secure the removable tubular member in position with the inner and outer radial walls secured between the outwardly extending flange and the locking mechanism.~~

50. (Cancelled)

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